

HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION 1119
By Cochran

A RESOLUTION to congratulate the Rangers of Unaka High School on their 2004 TSSAA Class A Basketball State Championship.

WHEREAS, the Tennessee General Assembly is pleased to commend and recognize those gifted student-athletes and teams who, through their magnificent exploits, bring honor to the State of Tennessee and serve as exceptional ambassadors of this state; and

WHEREAS, the boys basketball team at Unaka High School is comprised of such estimable Tennesseans who won the 2004 TSSAA Class A State Championship; and

WHEREAS, through diligence, dedication, and hard work, they maximized their considerable talents and reached the pinnacle of high school athletics; and

WHEREAS, after beginning their season with a disappointing 80-77 loss to Bearden, the Rangers posted a decisive victory over Johnson County and went on to compile an impressive 25-13 record; and

WHEREAS, as the season neared its end, the Unaka team began to peak at precisely the right point, claiming the District 1-A and Region 1-A Tournament Championships and bringing a streak of seven consecutive victories into the State Tournament in Murfreesboro; and

WHEREAS, Unaka opened the State Tournament on March 17 against Franklin Road Academy and prevailed 41-39 on the strength of a last-second shot by Tyler McCann; and

WHEREAS, the semifinals brought a matchup against Tennessee Temple; the two-time defending state champions proved to be no match for the Rangers, who won the game and advanced to the state finals; and

WHEREAS, the Rangers fell behind 14-6 early in the championship game, but they soon began to display the skill and character which had powered their tremendous success

throughout the season; they outscored Grace Baptist Academy 27-4 to take a commanding 33-18 lead into intermission; and

WHEREAS, Grace fought valiantly in the second half, but they were unable to cut into the Ranger lead; Unaka shot an incredible seventy-seven percent as a team from the floor in the second half, and, when the final buzzer sounded, they were ahead by a score of 63-47 and had won the Class A State Championship; and

WHEREAS, Tyler McCann was named Most Valuable Player of the Tournament, and he was joined on the All-Tournament Team by Rusty Chambers and Cody Collins; and

WHEREAS, the teamwork and focus on a common goal allowed those young men to garner individual honors, but it also precipitated the most impressive honor of all; each member of the team earned that supreme honor, the title of State Champions; and

WHEREAS, the young men who claimed that title were Tee Blevins, Adam Buckles, Chris Buckles, Rusty Chambers, Derek Cline, Cody Collins, Aaron Greer, Rusty Holtsclaw, Josh Jones, Josh Lowe, Tyler McCann, Chase Reeves, and Mike Walsh; and

WHEREAS, the team was ably guided by highly regarded Head Coach Donald Ensor, who helped precipitate the team's unrivalled success by sharing his deep love and great knowledge of the sport; and

WHEREAS, Coach Ensor built admirably upon the legacy of former Unaka Coach Ronnie Snavelly; and

WHEREAS, the coaches and players received invaluable support from the administration, faculty, and student body of Unaka High School; and

WHEREAS, the men of Unaka have ensured that they will forever be remembered as one of the greatest high school teams ever to grace the courts of East Tennessee, as they brought the region its first championship since 1995 and its first small-school title since 1974; and

WHEREAS, these young men epitomize all that is good in today's student-athlete, as they have achieved the highest level of success in sports, while evincing the most circumspect character both on and off the court; and

WHEREAS, the dedication, determination, work ethic, and talent of this group of young student-athletes not only made possible a championship basketball season, but also surely bode well for their success in every future endeavor; and

WHEREAS, this General Assembly finds it appropriate to pause in its deliberations to acknowledge and applaud the 2004 Unaka High School Rangers for their success on the court and for serving as fine examples of the high quality of Tennessee's youth; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE ONE HUNDRED THIRD GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF TENNESSEE, THE SENATE CONCURRING, that we join the administration, faculty, staff, students, and fans of Unaka High School in celebrating the Rangers' 2004 TSSAA Class A Basketball State Championship and honor and commend the talented young men who achieved this supreme success.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that we wish them much continued success and happiness in their future endeavors.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that an appropriate copy of this resolution be prepared for presentation with this final clause omitted from such copy.